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THE BAPTIST

# Record

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## WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

NOBTS offers classes



Baptist College News



World Hunger Day



Sunday School lessons



## So., Miss. Baptists to continue records

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — Giving through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) reached an all-time high during the 2001-02 fiscal year, according to a news release from the treasurer of the SBC, Morris H. Chapman.

Southern Baptists across the nation gave \$182,323,110.20 to support national and international missions and ministries through CP Missions during the fiscal year and another \$170,092,122.46 in designated gifts primarily through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

Mississippi Baptists played a large role in creating the SBC record, setting a CP record of their own with gifts to Mississippi CP during 2001 of \$29,826,248. The Mississippi CP fiscal year is January through December, while the SBC CP fiscal year is October through September.

Individual churches in the SBC

retain a percentage of the gifts they receive for the local ministries of the church, and send the remaining funds to state/regional conventions.

The state/regional conventions retain a percentage of the CP gifts they receive from the churches, to support ministries in their areas. The remaining funds are sent to the SBC Executive Committee for national and international ministries.

The percentages of distribution are at the discretion of each church and state/regional convention, respectively.

Counting CP and designated gifts together, total support from churches for SBC causes has set a new record for nine consecutive years.

Taken alone, CP has set records for eight of the past nine years. The designated gifts total was the second-highest in SBC history, after

setting records for eight straight years. Likewise, Mississippi Baptists have set CP giving records each year for at least a decade.

Program is the most effective voluntary funding program in the history of Christendom," Chapman added. "I thank God for trusting Southern Baptists

the budgeted amount of \$14,858,239.92.

The SBC CP total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state/regional conventions, and fellowships for distribution according to the 2000-2001 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget. The budget is set each year by messengers to the SBC annual meeting.

### Miss. CP shows slight rise

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,254,191 in the month of September to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP), according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the CP funds.

The September total was .82% more than the previous month's total of \$2,235,661, and 5.95% more than the \$2,127,604 given in September 2001. Mississippi CP giving is up 2.62% for the fiscal year that runs from January to December — but this year's

record Mississippi CP budget is a mere .19% over needs.

To meet the 2002 Mississippi CP budget, \$2,543,558 in gifts is needed each month. The total 2002 Mississippi CP budget of \$30,522,692, was adopted by messengers to the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC). Messengers to the 2002 MBC annual meeting October 29-30 at First Church, Jackson, will consider a proposed 2003 Mississippi CP budget of \$31,592,787.

Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as the Christian Education Clinic October 12 at Longview Heights Church, Olive Branch; the Girls in Action Mother/Daughter Overnight event October 18 at Camp Garaywa, Clinton; and the Youth Ministers' Workshop November 11 at Lake Tiak O'Khata near Louisville.



**GREAT COMMISSION AT WORK** — Global outreach supported by Southern Baptists' gifts through Cooperative Program (CP) Missions knows no bounds. In Suriname, missionary Tim McClard (foreground) travels by canoe with volunteers to a remote village to open doors for the Gospel. Southern Baptists and Mississippi Baptists continue to set CP giving records in supports of the two conventions' efforts to help reach Mississippi and the world for Jesus. (BP photo by Sandy King)

Cooperative Program gifts for the SBC fiscal year were 3.03% above the previous year, while designated gifts to SBC causes decreased by .5% during the period from Oct. 1, 2001, to Sept. 30, 2002.

Chapman said he is humbled "by the continued, passionate commitment of Southern Baptists in their support of the missions, ministries, and theological education that allows us cooperatively to reach the world."

"The record giving this year to national causes is only a hint of what Southern Baptists are giving to support ministries within their respective states and associations and the local church. It is apparent that Southern Baptists are giving sacrificially to advance the growth of God's Kingdom at home and abroad. I remain convinced that the Cooperative

with this amazing stewardship responsibility and I am grateful for the faithfulness of our Southern Baptist churches in responding to God's charge in such a positive way."

For the fiscal year, the \$182,323,110.20 in CP gifts equaled 102.26% of the CP Allocation Budget of \$178,298,879.00, a budget based on the 2000-01 CP fiscal year.

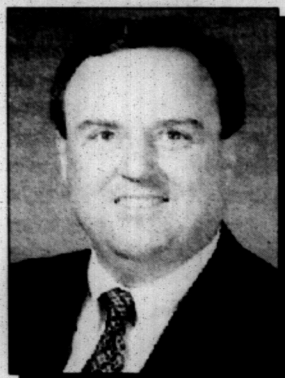
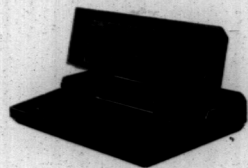
### New fiscal year starts with SBC CP dip

For September 2002, CP gifts of \$14,381,227.67 were 12.15% below September 2001's \$16,369,691.14, while designated gifts of \$3,113,669.48 for the month were 24.33% below the \$4,115,060.79 received a year earlier.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, September's receipts of \$14,381,227.67 were 96.79% of



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E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org**

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# Equal application of the law

Separation of church and state is an issue that has divided believers and non-believers alike for many years. On one side, there are people who passionately argue that the U.S. Constitution specifically prohibits establishment of an official, government-sanctioned church and no more, while people on the other side argue just as passionately that even the slightest mixing of church and state at any level — even a lighted cross on a state government building at Christmas — is exactly what the Founding Fathers intended to limit when they wrote the Constitution.

Obviously, America has gone too far toward the latter position. It's hard to make a reasonable argument that a simple creche on the front lawn of city hall will send the country sliding down the slippery slope toward a government church.

Christians have taken a beating for many years when it comes to this subject. It seems our legal and political foes have unlimited resources and every court ruling goes against us. Rather than be publicly humiliated, many Christians have decided to remain silent and not rock the boat.

So be it, but there are still outrages against which Christians should speak out regardless of the criticism. After all, we've been on the receiving end plenty of times. One such outrage is occurring right now at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Carolina Summer Reading program, for entering freshmen and transfers, began in 1999 as a way to ease new students into the social and academic life of the university. The students were given an interesting reading assignment over the summer before they started at UNC-Chapel Hill,

and were required to write a short essay and attend a discussion session on the book when school started.

So far, so good. Reading assignments over the years have included Civil War topics and other interesting subjects. This year, however, the Faculty Senate voted to require the students to read and report on *Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations*, as translated by Michael Sills. The book is basically a collection of 35 suras, or short passages from Islam's holiest book.

On the face, that is religious indoctrination at its worst. When Christian groups' protests were ignored, the American Family Association's Center for Law and Policy (CLP) in Tupelo filed a lawsuit complaining that required reading of such religious materials at a taxpayer-supporter public institution of higher learning was tantamount to government endorsement of a particular religion.

That tack has certainly been used on Christians over the years, hasn't it? At any rate, the university was quick to point out its published policy that states no student was required to read Sills' book and, shortly thereafter, the presiding judge declined to issue the preliminary injunction sought by CLP.

However, CLP Chief Counsel Michael Crampton said the university wasted no time after the hearing in telling new students that the book was indeed required reading and that the essay and attendance at a discussion session were indeed mandatory. An attendance list was kept to ensure that everyone attended the discussion sessions.

So back to court goes CLP and the university. "We look forward to the



opportunity to depose the defendants under oath. We think what we've uncovered so far is just the tip of the iceberg," said Crampton.

Bravo! Christians have been hounded for years by groups intent on wiping our faith from any public display whatsoever. Now, they and other groups are getting a taste of the bitter potion Christians have been forced to swallow for years. Perhaps now we will have equal application of law that has been used so effectively against Christians.

With all due humility, it's about time.

## GUEST OPINION:



*Help celebrate state  
offering victory!*

*By David Michel  
Associate Executive Director  
for Mission Strategy  
Miss. Baptist Convention Bd.*

don't slam the door on further gifts. In fact, we are encouraging churches to enlarge the giving period to include all the time between Labor Day and the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on October 29-30 at First Church, Jackson.

To express it in Baptist baseball terminology, "The state mission offering is not over until that Lottie lady sings!"

The extra promotion time will help us reach this year's goal of \$1,500,000. Your encouragement of and cooperation in the state mission emphasis is

essential to our success and effectiveness in bringing the Gospel to our state through creative ministries like church planting and disaster relief.

As your congregation elects messengers to the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, why not finalize your offering and send the check with them to the meeting? In that way, we could announce the victory of reaching our goal and celebrate the results while the convention is in session.

Let's not get lost in an exclusively dollars-and-cents description of state missions. It is my responsibility to promote the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering. (I am reminded that I get help from WMU leaders and other mission supporters all across our state) — but it is also my responsibility to encourage us to immerse ourselves in the witness and ministry opportunities inherent in the offering. If we do that, then no one can say the offering is over until every person in Mississippi has come to know Jesus, or until every child has been to missions camp, or until every church member has become a "great missionary" (a short-term volunteer), or until every cultural group in Mississippi has its own church, or until we all have "spent ourselves for a world in need!"

## Last Year's Margaret Lackey Gifts

JAN - SEPT \$222,540.89

OCT - \$529,742.50

NOV - \$332,476.61

DEC - \$109,708.73





# Seminarians find pure faith among Maasai

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Thousands of miles from a megachurch and thousands more from the technological trappings of contemporary evangelicalism, a group of students from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., discovered a component sometimes lacking within American evangelicalism: a people whose faith shines through their transformed lives.

Four students from Southern Seminary and two from its undergraduate school, Boyce College, traveled to Africa during the summer to research church growth trends among the Maasai people of Kenya and Tanzania.



**MAASAI PRAISE** — Southern Seminary student Tina Corn (left) sings praise songs with Maasai women in Kenya. Corn was one of six students to research the Maasai this summer. (BP photo by Eric Graf)

our findings," said Graf, a Ph.D. student who led the eight-week trip. "God is doing a truly remarkable work among the Maasai people. One of the recurring themes we found in their personal testimonies was a transformed life. Listening to hundreds of peo-

Traditional Maasai culture is bound to a clearly defined social structure. The people are culturally proud and their economy, lifestyle and identity spring from their role as herdsman and warriors, Graf said.

The work of God can be seen perhaps most clearly against the

fact that the Maasai have largely resisted western culture, which they view as being synonymous with the Christian faith. Yet, thanks to the missions work with the Maasai and inter-tribe evangelization by zealous converts, a vibrant Christian faith has taken hold.

received from family, they know they receive their strength to remain faithful through God's grace."

Another sobering reality that accompanies the Maasai ancient pagan religion gave White a new appreciation for her justification by faith in the atonement of Christ. The traditional religious practices of the Maasai include sacrificing animals to appease their god and to receive answers to prayer.

"I have come to a deeper appreciation of the sufficiency of Christ," White said. "Having interacted with people who still offer sacrifices to please God has made me see from a different perspective the need for the sacrifice of Christ and the sufficiency of his sacrifice." Christian believers among the

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The students — Patrick Barrett, Tina Corn, Eric Graf, Michael Phillips, Eldridge Smith, and Elizabeth White — interviewed 535 Maasai Christians to conduct a church-planting movement assessment.

Over the past three decades, the Christian faith has grown deeply imbedded roots in the soil of the Maasai people. While the results of the group's research is not yet final, this much is certain: The increase in converts and rise of new churches among the Maasai has been profound.

"We have so much information that has yet to be analyzed that we cannot make any conclusive statements regarding

ple tell you how they turned away from their sin and idolatry and embraced the one true and living God was one of the greatest privileges of my life."

The interview responses spoke of people similar to those of whom the apostle Paul wrote — people once separated from God who are now, in Christ, children of God.

One man told the group, "I am a new creation in Christ. From the beginning, I did bad things. I was a drunkard, selfish, and I hated people. When I was saved, all of that changed."

Another person told the group, "Even if I have nothing, I have peace in the Lord and the Kingdom of God."

Once they have trusted in Christ, the Maasai typically undergo severe persecution at the hands of tribal members who remain within their traditional religion.

"The most eye-opening aspect of my experience was seeing the level of commitment to faith in Christ the Maasai have," said White, a master of divinity student from Louisville, Ky. "I mainly interviewed the women, and most of them spoke of the abuse and dishonor they receive from their families because they have left the traditions in order to follow Christ."

"Accompanying the high commitment to faith in Christ, they also have a very simple faith in Christ. Seeing such faith has given me a fresh reminder of God's love for those who believe in Jesus Christ."

"God provides for their needs and even in the abuse

Maasai, in addition to demonstrating the genuineness of their faith through holy living, also display a fervent commitment to the Gospel and its sufficiency to save fellow tribesmen.

"Maasai believers are demonstrating a tremendous evangelical fervor and commitment in reaching their own people for Christ," Graf said. "They have also withstood tremendous social pressure and persecution as Christians living in a society that is strongly governed by African traditional religion."

"Yet they continue to stand firm and start new churches as God draws many unto himself through the power of the gospel. Leaders are emerging out of these new congregations and God is certainly doing a great work through the lives of these committed believers."

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

Frustrated with the lack of progress in the transition of leadership at First Church, Dallas, Joel C. Gregory unexpectedly resigns "immediately and irrevocably" during a Wednesday night service. "The ultimate agenda," Gregory said, "is the prolonging of the incumbent's (W.A. Criswell's) ministry rather than enabling of the new pastor's."

#### 20 years ago

A call for a massive, united funding effort for the colleges of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and Mississippi Baptist Children's Village — and the announcement that merger arrangements between Mississippi College in Clinton and Clarke College in Newton — are features of the recent convention's Education Committee meeting.

#### 50 years ago

Hinds County law enforcement officers are warned to clean up Hinds County by the Jackson Ministerial Association. The Ministerial Association, attended also by several prominent laymen, met and called Sheriff Carroll Robinson "on the carpet", admonishing him to deal more effectively with liquor and illegal slot machines in and around Jackson.

### Persecution list expands

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended Sept. 30 that U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell add India, Laos, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam to the list of "countries of particular concern" (CPC) for their participation in or toleration of particularly severe abuses of religious liberty. The panel also urged Powell to maintain CPC designations for Burma, China, Iran, Iraq, North Korea and Sudan. It marked the first time the USCIRF has urged CPC designation for India, Pakistan, and Vietnam. The commission has requested such a classification for Laos, Saudi Arabia, and Turkmenistan in recent years, but the State Department has declined to follow its advice. The USCIRF also established a "watch list" of countries where serious religious liberty violations occurred that did not reach the level of CPC designation. The panel's first "watch list" consists of Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Uzbekistan. The CPC designation "is one of the most important human rights acts taken by any U.S. administration," USCIRF chairwoman Felice Gaer said in a written release. "The [International Religious Freedom Act — IRFA] requires the U.S. to oppose these egregious and systematic violations, whether the government itself commits them or tolerates them. We hope to see actions commensurate with the severity of these abuses." The IRFA, which was enacted in 1998, requires the president to take specific actions against governments designated as CPCs. Under the law, he is provided a range of options, from diplomacy to economic sanctions. The president also has the authority to waive any action. Richard Land, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, is a USCIRF member.



# NOBTS music classes to begin October 21

## Churches affiliating with BGCT

DALLAS (ABP) -- Two Baptist churches from Oklahoma have recently affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), and others are showing increased interest in doing the same. Two Louisiana churches and one in New Mexico are also aligned with the Texas convention.

BGCT president Bob Campbell, a former pastor in Ardmore, Okla., said he has discussed affiliation with leaders from about 20 Oklahoma churches since May. Some have approached the Texas convention, but the BGCT has also sought to reach out to churches that aren't involved in their state convention, in order to improve their missions efforts.

"Why not work with them?" Campbell asked. "They really don't have a state affiliation. They are looking to do missions with a group that is more similar to them theologically." Campbell said some Oklahoma churches have been kicked out of their associations for various reasons, such as supporting women as deacons or pastors, and feel "disenfranchised" from the conservative-led Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

The BGCT voted to allow non-Texas churches into full fellowship in the convention in 2000. Convention affiliation allows the church to send messengers and vote at the annual state meeting, as well as channel church funds to BGCT entities.

Campbell said he looks forward to working with churches from other states for years to come. "Any group of Christians who want to cooperate and do missions is an advantage," he said.

October 21 begins the sixth of eight courses at seven locations in Mississippi sponsored by New Orleans Seminary. The eight courses are:

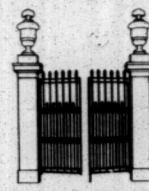
- Song Leading.
- Worship Planning.
- Reading Music: Rhythm/Pitch.
- Reading Music: Harmony/Melody.
- Hymnology.
- Music Administration/Staff Relations.
- Survey of Music Resources.
- Class Voice.

These courses are designed to provide basic training for bivocational music directors and other music leaders in churches.

The eight courses meet two hours per week. Each course is eight weeks in length. The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each course is independent and has no prerequisite.

Each student who completes the eight courses earns a Church Music Certificate from New Orleans Seminary plus a credit of eight hours toward an on campus degree program. There is a one-time registration fee of \$25. The cost of each course is

## New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary



\$85. Scholarships are available for first-time students. The grant is limited to one person per church.

The sixth course, Music Administration/Staff Relations, will meet once a week for two hours for eight consecutive weeks at the following locations and times:

• **Broadmoor Church, Madison** — beginning October 21 (7-9 p.m.); Jimmy McCaleb, Teacher.

• **First Church, Wiggins** — beginning October 21 (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.); James Hayes, Teacher.

• **First Church, Booneville** — beginning October 21 (7-9 p.m.); LuAnne Ford, Teacher.

• **Northcrest Church, Meridian** — beginning October 21 (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.); Buddy McElroy, Teacher.

• **Hernando Church, Hernando** — beginning October 21 (7-9 p.m.); Barry Tweedy, Teacher.

• **Tri-County Associational Building, Columbia** — beginning October 22 (6:30-8:30 p.m.); Kenny Adams, Teacher.

• **Meadville Church, Meadville** — beginning October 22 (6:30-8:30 p.m.); Chuck McMinn, Teacher.

These classes could be offered at other locations in the state also, where eight-ten students are interested in enrolling.

For more information, contact coordinator Jimmy McCaleb at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (292) 3273 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 273. E-mail: jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

## PREACHER'S KID

For a number of years now October has been designated as Pastor Appreciation Month. While some churches use other means and other times to say thank you to their pastors for caring, leading, loving, and being there, October is a special time to maybe individually find some way of expressing love to your pastor. More than just addressing the need for pastoral support and care, I want to take a moment in this column to address the needs of the pastor's children.

Through the years preacher's kids have been the subject of both rave and ridicule. Since my own father surrendered to the ministry later in life, I faintly remember the days before he became a preacher when I was a "normal" kid. Once he became the pastor of a church, I didn't know what had happened, but I sure knew things were different. I found it strange since I was the same little kid, in the same skin, getting in the same mischief, and struggling with the same problems — but apparently I was supposed to be different.

I am by no means an expert concerning this issue, but I have been a preacher's kid, raised three preacher's kids, have three grandchildren that are preacher's kids, as well as being an uncle to umpteen nieces and nephews who are preacher's kids. In addition, I have met, known, loved, and at times hurt, for so many kids whose parents are in ministry.

Since I do not intend for this article to be a book, let me reduce my comments to focus on three areas related to the pastor's children: the difficulties, the don'ts, and the do's of PKs.

• There are difficulties that children of ministers face that are not shared by other kids, except maybe for a rare exception here or there. One of the difficulties



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

has to do with the distinctions of being a pastor and a pastor's child. There is no question that both church and community expect the pastor to live by higher standards than most of the folks in other positions. While the Bible may not draw these distinctions, we do! Whether in speech, or temperament, or lifestyle, or devotion, most people think that the pastor ought to "tow the line" even if they themselves do not. They easily and glibly excuse themselves by saying, "Yes, but I'm not a preacher." Those same standards and principles then are imposed on kids. Their actions, attitudes, attendance, and tantrums are all duly noted. I now know that to be true because, although I'm decades past childhood, people still recount things I did, said, or didn't do. I was a preacher's kid!

Another difficulty has to do with disappointments. When a man goes into the ministry and makes himself available to care for the sheep, it is a 24-7, 365 day job. For those of you who say, "Well, my pastor doesn't work that much!" — you need to realize that with every phone call the potential is there to change everything that is planned for the rest of the day and to possibly change the next several days.

I can remember, both as a child and as a parent, planning for a family event such as going on a vacation or something as simple as a fishing outing, and it being either cancelled or delayed because of a need in the church. Just one example that I recall was our family sitting down for Christmas din-

ner one year. We had thanked God for His blessings, filled our plates, and before I took the first bite the phone rang and the call was from a family who had had a tragic accident and was in a hospital over an hour away. Without ever tasting the food, I left and went to be with that family who was caught in both grief and fear. While that may not happen every day, the potential is there for it to happen every minute.

• Let me try to address some of the don'ts related to preacher's kids.

**Don't use the kids.** I have watched, through the years, as people have told preacher's kids (me included) to tell their father something. I'm talking about things that need to be changed at the church, or issues that need to be addressed, or maybe something that they didn't agree with that the pastor had said. Most kids don't have a mechanism to understand the background, the context, or the reason for such a thing being done. When a big person (an adult) uses a little person (a child) to try to get their case stated or their will done, they are demonstrating how small they really are. Have enough integrity and forthrightness to talk to the pastor himself; don't use the kids.

Another don't that I would mention is kin to that, but worse than that — **don't mistreat the kids.** It is unfair, unjust, and unnecessary to hurt a child when you are upset with someone else. This kind of reasoning takes

place when someone may not agree with the position that the pastor has taken, or feels slighted in some way, and then turns and shows their disdain for the innocent children.

• Finally, let me take a moment to express some do's — two in particular.

1. **Do pray for your pastor's children.** I would expand that prayer support all across the Youth Department and the Children's area, and encourage you to pray for kids who are growing up in a world that is quite different from only a few years ago. Pray that God will protect them, bless them, guide them, use them, and walk gently alongside them as they grow in their love for Him and devotion to Him. Pray that, in a world of wickedness, they would be a testimony of miraculous grace.

2. The other do would be a personal act of ministry on your part, and that is **do find an opportunity to say a word of encouragement to the pastor's children.** While I was anything but a perfect child and probably would not have qualified to be a poster child for "Outstanding Preacher's Kid," I do remember, while growing up, certain people sprinkling words of encouragement along the road of my life. They would say a word of confirmation, or encouragement, or insight, as they apparently saw things in me that no one else saw. I surely had no clue — yet I still remember how they seemed to think that I was somebody or had some significance about me that I could possibly have something to offer to the Lord and to our world. I was blessed by those folks and I assure you that you can be a blessing and a great encourager to some child whose dad may be a preacher.

Take the word of this one PK — **you** can make a difference. Let God use you!



# New century, cutting-edge church studied

HOUSTON (BP) — What does it take to experience breakthrough in Christian ministry in the 21st century? The answers came in varied forms and for varied styles of churches during a Church on the Cutting Edge: A 21st Century Legacy conference September 30-October 2 at Second Church in Houston.

The event, sponsored jointly by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and Second Church, drew more than 3,000 participants for general sessions and small-group workshops led by more than 100 speakers and presenters.

In a first for such a conference, many sessions also are being opened up to those who were not able to attend in person through streaming video on the Internet. The broadcast is available through a link from [www.namb.net](http://www.namb.net).

One of the most pressing issues on the cutting edge of ministry is how churches should address the growing postmodern culture — a culture that North Carolina pastor James Emery White said is far more complex than simple generational differences can explain.

"We took this massive cultural change that was sweeping our nation and our world, and we reduced it to a generational

need for traditional Christianity or any other particular faith. It's not just that people are far away from Christ and his church in their life and knowledge," White said. "They no longer see their spiritual search even involving the discovery of any faith or religion."

He also described a shift in how cutting-edge churches

operate. In the 1980s many of the nation's largest churches grew on what he called the three "R"s of reason, relevance and a need to be real and authentic. Those are still essential, he said, but he also shared three "E"s of reaching postmoderns that

have helped Mecklenburg gain 80% of its members from among the unchurched since it began 10 years ago:

## Explanation

It is no longer sufficient to convince people that the resurrection occurred, for instance. "They say, 'resurrection, smessurrection — who cares? What does it have to do with my life,'" White said. The Bible is a complete unknown. "In the '80s and early '90s, they only needed the facts and the relevance of it. Today, they need to be introduced to it."

## Experience

Worship must strike a deeper chord, and merely changing the style to reflect popular culture is no longer sufficient, White said. "They need to feel like they're getting something experiential that they cannot get out in the world," he said. "So it would be the greatest of ironies if they came to church wanting to touch the transcendent and got only the world."

## Example

"At no time in recent history have models and mentors meant more," White said. "[The] churches of the '80s worked hard in terms of appearing to be real and authentic. Today we've got to go beyond that and present actual examples of a transformed life."

Ed Young Jr., pastor of the Dallas-area Fellowship Church in Grapevine, shared how expanded creativity in worship — with a liberal dose of humor — can help churches be more effective with whatever styles and cultures they happen to favor.

"We should never give a half-baked presentation of the bread of life," he said. "We should serve the food in the most compelling and creative way as possible. ... We've got to get out into the sunlight and hand out samples to the people who are passing by."

For a sermon series on spiritual warfare, for instance, he opened by emerging from an actual U.S. Army surplus tank — complete with helmet. For a Christmas message, he illustrated the key text of "Behold I stand at the door and knock" with a video of himself showing up unannounced at member's homes — asking them to sing "I'll Be Home for Christmas" with him. More than 27,000 people attended services that weekend, up from the 16,000 who attend on a regular basis.

In another analogy, a sermon on baptism focused on the apostle Paul's baptism of a man named Crispus — leaving an opening for a video on Crispus Kremus at a local Krispy Kreme

store. The donuts are "baptized" in the sugar, carefully placed in the box like members in a church, ready to feed others. Like most of his messages, the idea was developed as a team effort of the entire staff.

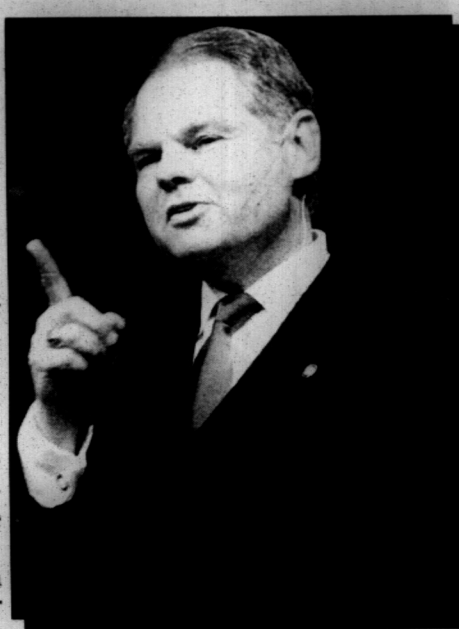
Precept Ministries founder Kay Arthur challenged leaders during a women's conference track to emulate the

boldness of the hero of the movie *Braveheart* — to be equipped through Bible study to have brave hearts in confronting a sinful culture.

"It is your job and my job to take that wellspring of water that wells up to give eternal life, and to offer it to a world that is thirsty for the thing that will satisfy them deeply," she said.

It is only through becoming intimate with Scripture, she said, that churches can effectively confront the culture.

"The Word of God is the foundation for all that we are," she said, "but the problem is that in the churches of the United States collectively and even on the mission fields... we don't have people in the Word



Reccord

of God so that they know truth for themselves." She also told the story of martyrs in North Korea who first watched as their children were hanged, knowing that they could have prevented it if they only would deny Christ. Then as their captors announced that a steamroller would crush the life out of their own body unless they relented, they voluntarily lay on the ground, sang a hymn of devotion to God and gave their lives.

"When we go out into that world, God expects you and me to lay down our (lives), to deny ourselves, to take up our cross

and follow him," she said. "He expects us to die to our comfort, to our pleasure."

N A M B President Robert E. Reccord closed out the conference with a challenge for churches to be ready to adapt their methods constantly in order to effectively reach the changing world around them. In one point he noted that God

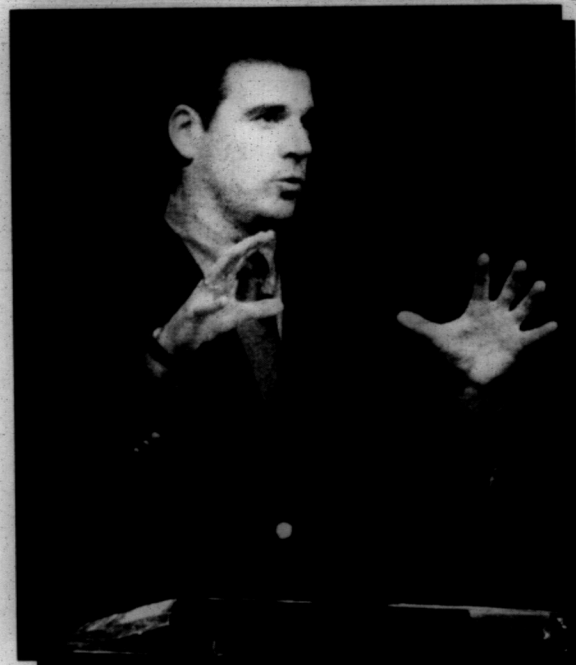
calls everyone to serve, not just those who happen to be called to vocational ministry.

"There is not a significant distinction between being called to vocational ministry and being called to be on-mission," he said. "We want people to see that God has a plan for them, whether it is in here or out there."

He also noted the difference among those called to Christian ministry in unhealthy ambition — where power, prestige and influence can take root — and the biblical ambition expressed in verses like 2 Cor. 5:9: "So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it."



Young



White

grouping," said White, pastor of Mecklenburg Community Church in Charlotte. "We didn't know what else to do ... but postmodernity is bigger than that. It cuts across all ages."

The cultural shift has resulted in people who are deeply spiritual but with no perceived

## Housing set for '03 SBC in Phoenix

PHOENIX (BP) — Housing registration opened Oct. 1 for the Southern Baptist Convention's June 17-18, 2003, annual meeting in Phoenix and the June 16 Kingdom Family Rally.

Hotel reservations can be made in several ways:

- via the Internet at [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net); select the 2003 Annual Meeting link.

- downloading the housing reservations form at the 2003 Annual Meeting link. Select "PDF version of housing brochure" and mail completed form to SBC Housing Bureau, c/o Greater Phoenix CVB, 400 E. Van Buren, Suite 600, Phoenix, AZ 85004, or fax it to (602) 256-5292.

- using the housing form in the September and October editions of SBC Life, journal of the SBC Executive Committee.

- obtaining a housing form from state Baptist convention offices.

The official housing deadline is May 5. Other housing registration details include:

- Reservation requests for 25 or more rooms should be made in writing to the SBC Housing Coordinator at the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203, or by e-mail to [lrchmond@sbnet.net](mailto:lrchmond@sbnet.net).

- Disabled persons or those with special needs in reserving a room may contact the SBC housing coordinator at (615) 782-8612 or [lrchmond@sbnet.net](mailto:lrchmond@sbnet.net).

- Deposit and cancellation information may be reviewed at the [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) 2003 Annual Meeting link.



## NAMES IN THE NEWS

David Fortenberry, pastor, presented **Chad Smith** with a certificate of deacon ordination at Fair River Church, Brookhaven, on Sep. 15. Pictured (from left) are Fortenberry, Smith, and his wife Erin.



Fortenberry, Chad and Erin Smith

Beacon Church, Hattiesburg, held a special service to license and reordain **David B. Moore II** on Aug. 25. Pictured are David and Jan Moore.



David and Jan Moore

**Bob Lynch** recently retired for the second time. Pastor, Central Church, for 25 years, and interim, Arlington Church,

Lincoln, for over 6 years, he and his wife, Nancy, currently reside in McComb.

North Columbia Church, Columbia, presented **Joe David Pope** with a certificate of deacon ordination on Aug. 18. Pictured (from right) are Pope, his wife Nancy, and Mike Grenn, pastor.



Joe David & Nancy Pope and Mike Grenn, pastor

North Columbia Church, Columbia, presented **Ruth McKenzie** with a plaque and gift certificate for 19 years as church secretary. A reception will be held for her after the



Tom Rainey Mike Grenn, Ruth & Dan McKenzie

Ruben Burguete; Vacation Bible Schools were taught in which 49 children accepted Christ; a mission opened in Matamoros; eye clinics were conducted in which 22 adults accepted Christ; and medicines were brought to medical ministries in the Rio Grande Valley. Pictured (from left) are Jim Harmon, Rodriguez and her son, Alex,\* and Louis Grones.

**Star Church, Star**, will hold Judgement House "The Dysfunctional Family" on Oct. 26 from 5:30 p.m. until 9 p.m., and on Oct. 27, 30, and 31 from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. For group reservations or directions, call (601) 845-2736.

**GA's and WOM from Jericho Church, Guntown**, completed mission projects and visited the Mississippi River Ministry Center of North Delta Association. Pictured (from left, row 1) Laken Bryson, Patience Campbell, Carley Bryson, (row 2) Annette Bryson, Doris Hood, Jeanette Snell, and Linda Hall.

**Yandell Road Church, Gluckstadt**, will feature Erica Parker, First Church, Flora, in concert on Sunday, Oct. 13 at 10 a.m. Author Comans is pastor.



GAs of First Church Philadelphia

evening service on Oct. 13. Pictured (from left) are Tom Rainey, Mike Grenn, McKenzie, and her husband Dan.

The GA's of First Church, Philadelphia, received their bracelets and charms for finishing the WorldVenture books for their grade levels. Pictured (from left, row 1) Courtney Bounds, Lynzie Tingle, Allyson Adkins, Bethany Jones, (row 2) Kristin Lee, Meg Thrash, Mollie Clair McKay, (row 3) Anna Luke, Channing Kinard, and Rebecca Moore. GA's not pictured are Erica Brown, Brittany Calhoun, Welkum Carlson, Miranda Carpenter, Sarah Knight, Alana Kron, Alaina Puckett, Kera Robinson, Jennifer Warren, and Stephanie Warren.

**Calvary Chapel, Parchman**, Joe Young, pastor, completed its annual Mexico Mission Trip in July. Fourteen Calvary members were joined by 42 others from across North Mississippi, including Missionary Judy Hayes of Mexico, to work with the Borderlanders. During a week of ministry, a car was delivered to Lupita Rodriguez, a national missionary; workers constructed a house frame for church pastor,



WMO and GAs of Jericho Church, Guntown



Jim Harmon, Alex & Lupita Rodriguez and Louis Grones

### Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and Proven Ways to Reach Them **DR. THOM RAINER**

What does it take to get unchurched people into the church? This is the question Dr. Rainer addresses in his newest book, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and Proven Ways to Reach Them*. This one day seminar will give you special help in connecting with the unchurched people in your ministry area.

Prior to joining Southern as founding dean of the Billy Graham School, Dr. Rainer served as pastor of churches in Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, and Indiana.

**OCTOBER 17, 2002**  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

To Register Send To: (Pre-Registration \$20.00; At the Door \$25.00)

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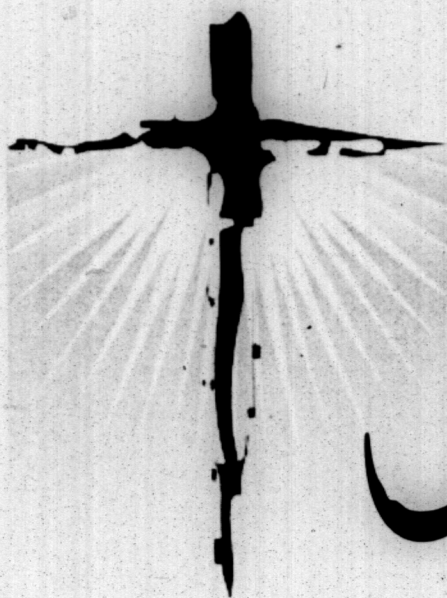
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MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

# Missions Mobilization

VOL. III, NO. III

FALL QUARTER 2002



♦ MISSIONS MOBILIZATION DEPARTMENT ♦ P.O. Box 530, JACKSON, MS 39205-0530 ♦ PHONE (601) 292-3398 ♦ FAX (601) 292-3390 ♦ E-MAIL KRHODES@MBCB.ORG

PURPOSE:  
TO PROVIDE AN  
OPPORTUNITY FOR  
VOLUNTEERS  
TO USE THEIR SKILLS  
TO WITNESS FOR CHRIST  
THROUGH MISSION  
PARTNERSHIPS.

## State Mission Offering has worldwide impact

By Ken Rhodes, Director  
MBCB Missions Mobilization

A section of the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering assists volunteers on mission globally. Many of the testimonies and pictures of this edition of the Missions Mobilization Newsletter are from those receiving assistance.

The following is a testimony from one such

recipient, William Carey College faculty member, Michael Chute.

"As a Southern Baptist my entire life, I have always supported the State Mission Offering in every convention in which I have been associated. Now, as a recipient of those funds for this particular mission project, I know first-hand the joy that comes from God's people cooperating together to help build His Kingdom.

"I just wanted you to know how much this gift has touched me personally. I am so proud to be associated with Mississippi Baptists and to be a part of the Kingdom-building efforts in which God is using them.

"The Margaret Lackey Scholarship made it possible for us to take a drama team of faculty and students to help our missionaries at the Brackenhurst Baptist Assembly in Kenya."

## Sacrificial spirit of SE Asian Christians inspires volunteers

First Church, Gautier, led by Pastor and wife Billy and Rebecca Williams, ministered among unreached people in Southeast Asia. The pictures and testimonies of fellow church member volunteers tell the story.

"In August, we were blessed to



Sandy Miller (right) of First Church, Gautier, shows University students in a SE Asian city where she lives in the USA.

participate in a mission trip to a Last Frontier area in Southeast Asia. We went with the lofty idea of helping the

people and representatives in that area. However, God blessed our hearts and lives in a much deeper way than we could have possibly touched theirs. When we saw the sacrifice and danger the new believers in that area experience, we realized how great their faith is and how weak, in comparison, is our faith. The new believers give up everything - home, family, and friends - in order to proclaim their faith in Jesus. Our prayer is that He will keep these new believers safe from harm as they try to do His work in that area."

Richard and Peggy Walker

"I had many reservations about traveling to a last frontier country in Southeast Asia where Islam is not only the primary religion, but an integral part of the culture. It is a place where Jihad has been declared. It is a country of religious and cultural barriers.

"The amazing thing is that once I was there, working with the missionaries, I saw no barriers. I saw only the love of Christ calling the people unto Him. I saw the fruit of the Spirit being poured out onto a lost people. '...Against such things there is no law.' Gal. 5:22. Against such things there is no barrier. I thank God for showing me the true meaning of that verse."

Daniel G. Foster



Peggy Walker (above, left, standing) and Ann McDaniel (left, seated) of First Church, Gautier, enjoy a Recipe Swap Fellowship with women from in SE Asia.



Billy Williams (above, left) and Dan Foster (right) of First Church, Gautier, spend time with University students in The English Center in SE Asia.

Team members (below) from First Church, Gautier, use a parachute in playtime with children from a SE Asia and Oceania English Club.



### Missions Mobilization Celebration

First Baptist Church, Jackson  
Celebration Banquet, November 15, 2002

Yvonne Bruce, Texas - speaker  
Former missionary to unreached people group

- Partnership displays
- Testimonies • Fieldside coordinator reports
- Fellowship • Mission speakers

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Building  
November 16, 2002, Area Conferences

For more information, please contact the MBCB Missions Mobilization Dept.



## On mission – God is at work

*"There is a crop waiting for volunteers to come gather."*

*Ken Rhodes*

Missions mobilization is a movement of God upon and through His people. The volunteer is a transparent believer responding to God's call by praying, giving, going, and telling.

Through these pages of the Missions Mobilization Newsletter we want you to hear, to feel, and to see the heart of Mississippi volunteers. Each has a new, different kind of story. Each has experienced immense joy and yet they experience a deeper burden for new friends.

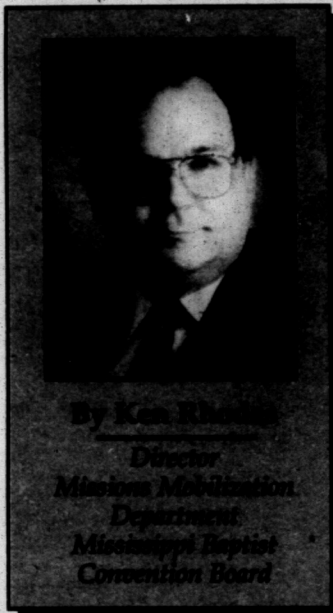
These volunteers have met challenges which they perhaps felt could never be reached, but in the midst of sacrificial service to God, unbelievable things happened before their eyes. Just a few of the miracles are

summed up in words like encouragement, awakening, healing of body, barriers broken, personal life change.

The greatest experiences have been that of seeing folks of all ages welcomed to the Kingdom.

As you, the reader, sense the sheer delight and yet the burden of these volunteer laborers may your own eyes, ears, and heart be challenged to join the ranks of believers going into the harvest. There is a crop waiting for volunteers to come gather. Celebrate as you hear

excerpts from a few of their remarks, but better yet, get ready. It is your turn. The volunteer laborers are still small in number compared to the crop that is ready to be harvested.



## Nolens return from Ukraine

*By Ken Rhodes, director  
MBCB Missions Mobilization*

Thomas and June Nolen have returned to Mississippi from Ukraine, having served as coordinators for Mississippi volunteers to Odessa, Ukraine, for the past four years. The Nolens have meant much to Mississippi folks. Their relationships with Ukrainian churches were outstanding.

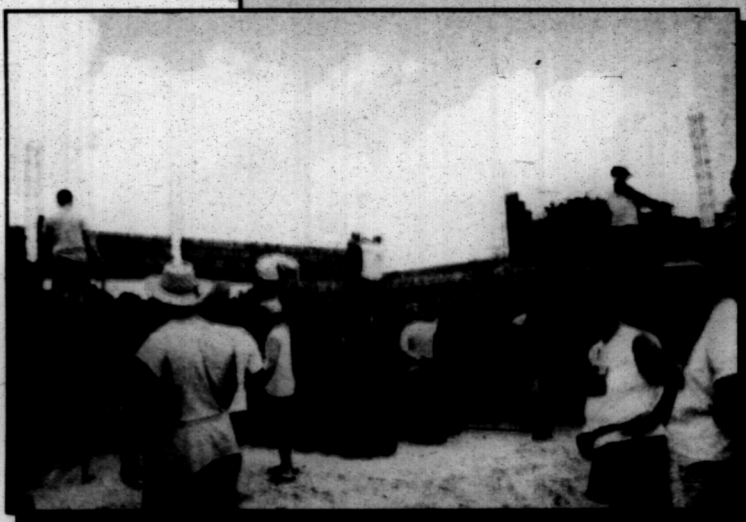
This relationship with Ukrainian churches was demonstrated in that a reception planned by the folks in Odessa for the Nolens was attended by 52 of the 55 pastors with whom the Nolens had personally worked. Many of these pastors traveled a long distance and at a personal sacrifice to show their appreciation.

A reception for Thomas and June was held at the Baptist Building in Jackson, on September 17 for Mississippi Baptists to express appreciation for their hard work. The representation of Mississippi Baptists by the Nolens in the Ukrainian partnership has been superb and deeply appreciated by hundreds of volunteers whom they have assisted.

## The 'joy of missions' becomes reality for Escatawpan on Brazilian project

"During the summer, I tried hard to get a grasp on what a missionary really does. Well, these are the two main callings that a missionary has: love and discipleship. A missionary has to love the people with a love that only God can give them and a missionary disciples a new believer or a believer who has never been discipled. By discipling a believer, the missionary has to build a relationship with that person and work with them on a daily basis. This was my learning experience while in Brazil and I thank you for allowing me to go and learn."

*Britt Jonston, Escatawpa Church*



*Britt Jonston (third from left), Mark Toomer (laying bricks in corner) and Sheila McCrory (second from right) help build church in NE Brazil.*

"When I discovered missions, I discovered what had been missing in my Christian walk with the Lord. I have been to Brazil three times. As a result of God working in my life through these mission trips, my life has changed. I am now actively involved in WMU where I can share 'the joy of missions' not only in a foreign land but right here where we live. Not everyone is called 'TO GO', but we are all called to share the GOOD NEWS of Jesus Christ."

*Sheila McCrory, WMU Director  
Escatawpa Church*

"This past June I was blessed to be a part of a mission team from our church that went to Northeast Brazil. While working with missionaries, Vic and Sharon Johnston, and journeyman, Cindy George, we were able to help build two churches and plant many seeds in the name of Christ. The Brazilian people are so loving, kind, and open to the gospel. To see the smiles on their faces just because we went to help was all the payment I will ever need. Building churches in a foreign land is not easy, but it is the most rewarding thing I have ever done in my life."

*Mark Toomer, Brotherhood Director, Escatawpa Church*

## Church visits city in China

Volunteers share thoughts about their mission trip to an unreached city in China which their church adopted.

Charlotte (last names withheld for security reasons) writes, "I was touched at how the Chinese people love talking to Americans. They will listen for hours. What an opportunity to share about our Lord. The boldness that God gives you to speak is incredible. What a joy, and how I long to do it again. Thank you Jesus!"

Jane reports, "I have never been so blessed as when I had the opportunity to share the love of Christ with university students at



*Jerry builds relationships with the children in an unreached city.*

English corners each evening. To see the love on those young students' faces as we talked to them was wonderful. Encouraging the Chinese Christians and other workers was also encouraging to me."

Erich shares that, "Going to China allowed me to see how another

culture responds to the unconditional love of Christ. God showed me that His love has a life-changing effect on these people and it is real. It is good to HEAR about how people respond to Jesus, but it is even better to SEE it."

*Erich shares faith with someone in an unreached city.*





# Multiple outreaches welcomed in Ukraine

Ron Holmes, minister of youth for First Church, Louisville led his 2002 graduating seniors on an Ukraine mission trip. It was the first time for all the team members to participate in an international missions experience.



Youth team (above) from First Church Louisville leading Backyard Bible Club with Gypsies in the north part of Oosatova, a village about 45 minutes out of Odessa, Ukraine. Adam Wright looks on from the back of the group as Laura Butts and Jake Donald teach the children.



Youth (above) from First Church, Louisville led a youth night program at the Odessa, Ukraine Youth Training Center. On far left is Skip Platt from Alabama who served as a student summer volunteer. The Louisville group leading the singing is Laura Butts, Dana Quinn, Jake Donald, and Adam Wright playing the guitar.



Virginia Bonney (above, front left) from First Church, Crystal Springs speaks to a women's conference in Nikoliev, Ukraine. Her Ukrainian interpreter, Luba, is to her left. Joan Tyler was the team leader.

"Since our team was the first to go into Nikoliev and Kherson, Ukraine, we felt a heavy responsibility, as the 'pioneers,' to build a good foundation. What a thrill to have the warmest welcome we could have imagined, and to have great crowds of women so hungry for Bible study and fellowship!"

Joan Tyler, First Church, Collins



Albert White (left, middle) from Pinelake Church, Brandon shares his faith with a group of Ukrainians after a game of basketball.

"I was so excited, yet nervous, after all this was the first time I have been out of the country and being my first mission trip, I didn't know what to expect. It was truly a blessing to be able to go to Odessa, Ukraine, and spend time with the kids at the orphanages, the schools and the apartment complexes. These kids enjoyed the simplest things in life, yet didn't know the first thing about Jesus

Christ. It was a great experience to be able to use the game of basketball to open doors for the missionaries and pastors that are already in Ukraine. Our contributions seem so small in the grand scheme of things, but I keep reminding myself that it only takes a seed to reap a harvest and we did plant some seeds."

Danny Hughes, Pinelake Church, Brandon

Kathy Johnson (right, center) of First Church, Maben checks the blood pressure of an Ukrainian woman during a health clinic in Razdelnaia, Ukraine. Her interpreter (left) assists with communication.

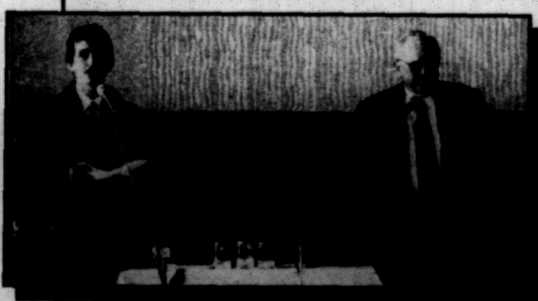


Hal Bates (left, right), pastor of First Church, Collinsville assists an Ukrainian man select eye-glasses in a health clinic in Razdelnaia, Ukraine. The Ukrainian interpreter is in the foreground.



The church of Kodema, Ukraine at the farewell meal for the Mississippi Baptist team consisting of G. Pat Burkin, David Patterson, Gerald Miller and Samuel Parrett. Pictured at left, left to right are Gerald Miller and Pat Burkin.

Dan Howard (right), pastor of First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, speaking during a women's conference in Nikoliev, Ukraine. Standing with Dan is Luba, the interpreter for the event.



Eugene Dobbs (left, right) from First Baptist Church, Philadelphia speaks during a pastor's conference in Nikoliev, Ukraine. His interpreter, Sergei, is on the left.





## Paving the way to the future

By Paul Harrell, consultant  
MBCB, Missions Mobilization

The best way to predict the future is to create it. Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Unless we reach out in passion and evangelistic zeal to the lost, they will perish. We cannot change yesterday. We can only make the most of today, but we can face tomorrow with hope and determination to make a difference in the lives of people through our partnership. The bridges that span our relationships and our dreams are built by teamwork.

Coming together is a beginning—

Staying together is progress—

Working together is success—

The high road to service and ministry is traveled with integrity, compassion, and understanding — people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care. The individual, church, and/or association that is committed to creative collaboration will ride the wave of the future. They will go beyond the realm of assumptive thinking and welcome the dawn of innovation, because there is nothing more empowering than a God given ministry whose time has come. God has opened the door of opportunity for Mississippi Baptists and the Convention of Maryland/Delaware to be involved in such a dynamic partnership. Those who miss the opportunity also miss the blessing. There is a place through this partnership where individuals, churches, and associations can minister. Perhaps God is willing to make that difference in such a ministry through you.

In a recent visit to Maryland/Delaware we received many expressions of gratitude and appreciation for our partnership. Here are some of these expressions by selected individuals.

"The Mississippi Partnership has been a very positive experience for our association. Churches have been strengthened. Pastors have been encouraged. New prayer warriors have been enlisted. People who were living in sin, apart from God have been gloriously saved through the efforts of Mississippi Baptists working with us. In addition, we have made new friends that will last for a lifetime. Everyone, from summer mission teams, semester missionaries, summer missionaries, etc. have come well-trained and enthusiastic." — James McBride, Director of Missions, Delaware Baptist Association, Dover, Del.

"Being in a somewhat remote Appalachian area, our pastors and churches have been overwhelmed that fellow Southern Baptists as far away as Mississippi even know about us, much less that Mississippi Baptists have kept the road hot to come to help us. Also, we were privileged to return part of the favor by taking a team of our pastors to Mississippi to preach simultaneous revivals...a first for us. We praise the Lord for His people in Mississippi." — Kenneth R. Heath, Director of Missions, Western Baptist Association, LaVale, Md.

"The partnership between Mississippi Baptists and Maryland/Delaware Baptists has been tremendously successful. Churches have been started, communities are being reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and souls have been saved as a result of this impacting relationship. All eleven of the associations in Maryland/Delaware have been strengthened by the prayer support of Mississippi Baptists. You are building a strong legacy in this strategic part of the world. Thank you, Mississippi Baptists." — Rick Hancock, Department Director for Partnership Missions, Evangelism and Prayer, Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, Columbia, Md.

"Mississippi Baptists are leaving an indelible impression on the landscape of Maryland/Delaware. There are new brothers and sisters in the Kingdom because of the witness of the new churches you helped to start. There are numerous buildings that will enable us to better serve the Lord because you helped build and equip them. Churches have a new, fresh vision for their future because you helped "jumpstart" them. You have been both a Paul and a Barnabas to us, and we are eternally grateful. Thank you, Mississippi Baptists." — David Lee, Executive Director, Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, Columbia, Md.



Todd Smith (left) and Robby Peterson (right) of Steep Hollow Church, Poplarville repairing kitchen floor in Chinese Church in Ellicott City, Md.



(From right to left) Jessica Stokes, K-Ann Dorris and Ashley Schmit from First Church, Pontotoc conducting a Backyard Bible Club for Bethany Church in Willmington, Del.

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## Mississippi Baptists continue to impact NE

By Ken Lyle, consultant  
MBCB, Missions Mobilization

"Progress is evident; the spirit of the people is excellent!" With these words, Wayne Gullett, missions director for Calhoun Association, summed up our telephone conversation about a summer mission journey from Mississippi to Vermont. Baptists from Calhoun County churches shared the Good News of Christ with folks in several Vermont congregations through personal witness, construction projects, and Vacation Bible School.

Reed Kirk, minister of youth, at First Church, Booneville, led forty teens to Massachusetts in early June for repair work on the Luther Rice Retreat Center in Northborough and prayer-walking in Salem. The group also sang a concert on the campus of Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Beyond question, Mississippi Baptists have had a wonderful spring and summer of mission activities throughout the northeastern United States. Churches and collegiate groups have traveled to Boston, Philadelphia, western Massachusetts, and southern New Jersey, to name just a few ministry locations. Our mission dollars have been well spent in mobilizing volunteers as partners with Baptists in the Northeast.

Already, plans are being made for Mississippi involvement in the Northeast in 2003. We are talking with Baptist leaders in New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Vermont about specific needs we can meet.

One of the major, ongoing challenges churches in the Northeast have is the need for interim pastors. Mississippi Baptists are working to meet this need by linking

retired pastors and associational missions directors with pastorless congregations in the Northeast.

Even as I write this column, three Mississippians are seeking God's will about interim work in Vermont.

One retired pastor, Robert Sanderson, has been called to lead First Church, Tolland, Connecticut for six months, beginning October

1. Another retiree is working with associational leaders in Maine with a view to becoming interim director of missions.

Indeed, Mississippi Baptists continue to impact the Northeast for Christ through volunteers, cooperative dollars, and prayer. We can and must praise God because "progress is evident" in our quest to make sure everyone in the Northeast hears the gospel and has a strong, nearby congregation with which to fellowship and minister.



Mt. Olive Church, Baldwyn, Miss. team members preparing for evening Bible Clubs in Fairhaven Community Church in Middletown, Del.





## JUST FOR THE RECORD

GA's of First Church, Collinsville, were recognized for their achievements in World Ventures on Sep. 8. Pictured (from left, row 1) Randel Walker, Rachel May, Maddie Odom, Allison Reaves, Abby Odom, Becca Mowdy, Katie Sims, (row 2) Emily Watkins, Emily Vaughn, Kaitlyn Flashcamp, Andrea Mabry, Jodi McKeithen, Alexa Flashcamp, (row 3) Lindsey Summerlin, Emily Walker, AnnaBeth Bates, Katie Odom, (row 4) JoAnn Walker, Krista Horton, Virginia May, Hope Mabry, and Ginger Summerlin. Not pictured are Denise Vaughn and Celeste Loper. Hal Bates is pastor.



Children's Choir of Goss Church, Columbia



Youth of New Liberty Church, Morton

Ground breaking for a new Fellowship Complex at Pearson Church, Pearl, was held Sep. 23. This was made possible through monies left to the church by the late Mrs. L. W. Bright. Pictured (from left) Scott Jones, pastor, and the building committee: Moody Mask, Virginia Mask, Pauline Corban, Mickey Corban, Doug Windham, Denom Butler, Kay Lloyd, Connie Seane, and Jane Perdue. Reatha Chapman and Mike Stephens are not pictured.

Caledonia Church, Caledonia will celebrate its fifth anniversary on Nov. 3. The service will begin at 9:30 a.m. Gowan Ellis will be preaching followed by dinner on the grounds.

tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for children. All tickets will be \$10 at the door. For more information, call For the Sake of Zion at



Ground Breaking Committee of Pearson Church, Pearl

(662) 328-4767 or (662) 386-2254 or by email at [ftsoz@sake-ofzion.org](mailto:ftsoz@sake-ofzion.org). A love offering will be taken at the concert.

Ard. Alicia Bass and Melinda King are choir directors, and Mark McArthur is pastor.

Three adults and 36 youth, New Liberty Church, Morton, recently performed the musical Flashback. They performed four nights with attendance over 900. For information on decisions made as a result of this program, please contact New Liberty Church, 191 Measells Road, Morton, Miss., 39117, or call (601) 732-6277.

Parkway Church, Natchez, will be hosting its 50th anniversary on Nov. 9 and 10. Past ministers will be speaking at the events. For more information, call the church office at (601) 442-7434.

Goss Church, Columbia, Children's Choir presented the patriotic musical, Salute to America, on Sept. 1. A new church year celebration followed with food, fellowship, and fireworks. Pictured (from left, row 1) Tristan Rutland, Wiley Cleland, Madelyne Ard, Anna Kate Rayburn, Tyler Terry, Kate Lowery, Shane Saucier, (row 2) Sara Robertson, Oliva Broome, Katie Terry, Chelsa Rutland, and Malori



GAs of First Church Collinsville, Collinsville

To conclude the year's Sesquicentennial events at Liberty Church, Noxapater, the congregation invites you to an Old Fashion Re-enactment Day, Oct. 20. Service will begin at 10:30 a.m., with dinner on the grounds immediately following. A church wide business meeting will be held at 2 p.m.

Gold City will be in concert at Antioch Church, Columbus, on Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. Advance

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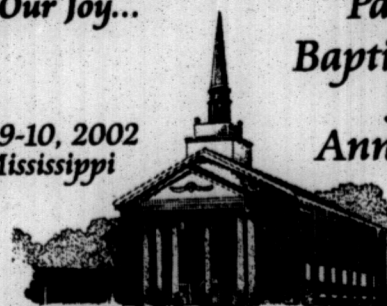
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(I repent.)
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(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.  
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

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# BAPTIST COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS

## Teen virgin rate rising, CDC says

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The percentage of U.S. high school students who say they are virgins rose to 54.1% during the 10-year period of 1991-2001 from 45.6%, according to data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The percentages were reversed a decade earlier, the CDC reported.

According to another study, meanwhile, teens who engage in first-time sexual intercourse most commonly do so in one of their parents' homes. The finding was reported by Child Trends, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, D.C.

Various decade-long improvements in teen sexual risk behavior noted by the CDC are parallel to decreases in the rates of gonorrhea, pregnancy and birth rates among adolescents, said Lloyd Kolbe, who directs CDC's adolescent and school health program.

"Although we can't point to a single reason for these improvements, we think they are due to the combined efforts of many people — youth themselves, parents and families, schools, community organizations that serve young people, health-care organizations, faith-based organizations, the media and government agencies that work to reduce sexual risk behaviors among young people," Kolbe said in a CDC news release.

The first-time locations for teens age 16 through 18 engaging in sexual intercourse, according to Child Trends, were the teen's home, listed by 22% from a National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, or the home of the teen's partner, listed by 34%.

Clarke College Alumni from the early 1950's will meet on Sat., Oct. 12, in the Board Room of the Student Center at Mississippi College. Alumni will gather at 10 a.m. for fellowship, break for lunch in the student center, and reconvene for a meeting following lunch. Dress is casual. For more information, please contact Don Wainwright at (251) 343-4049.

Tommy King, psychology professor and director of programs at William Carey College, was recently inducted into the Lions Club Hall of Fame. A member of Columbia Lions, King joins eight other members of the Hall of Fame. He has served the Lions International Board of Directors for three years

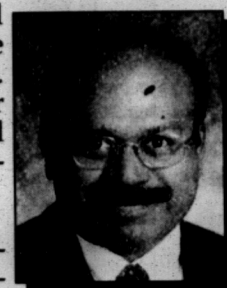
and directed the Lions World Chorus. King is the recipient of five International President's Awards, five diamond Melvin Jones Fellows, and the Ambassador of Good Will Award.

Blue Mountain College, Department of Music, will present the annual Fall Choral Concert on Thursday, Oct. 24, at 7:30 p.m., in Garrett Hall Auditorium. The Program will feature the College Chorale, Handbell Choir, and

Faculty/Staff Choir. The concert program will be under the direction of Larry W. Newell and June Meyer will serve as accompanist. Admission is free. For more information, call Larry W. Newell at 662-685-4771, extension 163.

Xavier Retnam, a professor and chair of mathematics at Blue Mountain College, presented a paper, Different Methods of Factorization, at the Louisiana-

Mississippi section of the Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges held in New Orleans, La., on Sep. 21. He talked about the merits and problems in using different methods of factorization. He discussed the advantages of using technology in teaching, and he presented a formula for factorization that can be applied using a calculator.



Retnam



Blue Mountain College Concert Choir

## NOBTS battered, but not bowed, by hurricane

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — When New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) reopened its doors Oct. 4 after closing for a day while Hurricane Lili passed, some staff and students were greeted with power outages.

Nearly a third of the campus was out of electricity during the onslaught of the hurricane, including the campus' preschool education center, some residences, and the Hardin Student Center, which houses many of the administrative offices and Leavell College classrooms.

"Today, we will be known as Bangladesh Baptist Seminary," NOBTS President Chuck Kelley told staff and faculty assembled in the seminary's cafeteria. "We are dedicating our day to the Southern Baptist missionaries around the world who constantly live under difficult circumstances to do the Lord's work."

Pointing to the ongoing challenges that missionaries face, Kelley reminded the seminarians that God's mission would

still be accomplished despite the difficulties of the day. Seventeen classes scheduled in the Hardin Student Center were moved to other locations on campus that did have electricity, including the seminary's Martin Chapel and the cafeteria. The campus' library and cafeteria, as well as some residences and other offices, did have electrical power, although the Internet server was down.

Meanwhile, staff members met with coworkers in the cafe-

teria, taking advantage of the time to check on each other's progress during the storm. The overwhelming response of the crowd was gratitude for how God spared lives and property.

"God answers prayers," campus nurse Krystal Richard exclaimed. "To go from a Category 4 to a Category 2 — or even Category 1 — hurricane before hitting land is a definite answer to prayer."

"I think we're very fortunate," agreed Francis Kimmitt,

associate dean of Leavell College. "This could have been a Category 4 hurricane in our city [with devastating results]."

"The fact that we're not underwater is a real blessing," he added. "We could be sitting in a parking lot instead."

The storms over the past two weeks in Louisiana have served as a reminder that Christians need to be flexible not just on the mission field but wherever God has placed them, Kimmitt said.



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# REVIVAL & HOMECOMING DATES

**Carey Chapel, Red Banks:** Oct. 20; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship 11 a.m.; Arnold Goode, guest speaker; dinner on the grounds; Living truth, afternoon singing; O.E. Langner, pastor.

**Dublin, Covington:** Oct. 20; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall; church history and other speakers, 1:30 p.m.; L.C. Anthony, speaking; Pat Nations, pastor.

**White Oak, White Oak:** Nov. 3; 160 years; worship, 10:30 a.m.; Vic Bowman, speaker; lunch at noon; worship, 1:15 p.m.; Cemetery Association meeting following afternoon service; Tim Robertson, pastor.

**McAdams, Attala:** Oct. 13; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch at noon; music, 1:30 p.m.; no evening worship; Kelly Mitchell, interim pastor.

**Mt. Vernon, Newton:** Oct. 20; worship, 10:45 a.m.; Cheryl Dubose, Rita Gibbon, Heather and Ashley Beeland, and Roger Estes, morning music; Johnney Mac Boggan, speaker; lunch on grounds; afternoon music featuring Crystal Graham and local talent, 1:30 p.m.; Steve Pouncey, pastor; Merrill Cassel, music director.

**Pine Bluff, Hazlehurst:** Oct. 20-23; 150th Anniversary, Sunday, 10:30 a.m.; Vellie Scott and Van Quick, speakers; covered dish lunch following; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Clarence Young, speaking.

**Caledonia Church, Caledonia:** Oct. 20-24; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thu., 7 p.m.; Bobbie Douglas, evangelist; Charlie Farrar, music.

**Mt. Pisgah, Enid:** Oct. 13; Otha Geeslin, Independence, music, 10:30 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; David Crowe, speaker; fellowship dinner, 12 p.m.; Scottie Aldridge and Steve Gregory, Batesville, music; Marty Evans, pastor; Howard Armstrong, associate pastor.

**Spring Hill, Waterford:** Oct. 13; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; fellowship meal to follow; song service, N 2 Jesus; Jimmy Smith, former pastor.

**Siloam, West Point:** Oct. 13; worship, 10:45 a.m.; Joe Senter, Warner-Robbins, Ga., speaker; Mike Woodson, Pell City, Ala., music; covered dish dinner following service; John Gainer, pastor.

**Mt. Carmel, Edinburg:** Oct. 13; worship, 10:30 a.m.; lunch at noon in fellowship hall; Randolph Scott, former pastor and speaker; Keith Fulton, pastor.

**Clear Branch, Florence:** Oct. 13; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; afternoon singing. Greg Johnston, Escatawpa, speaker.

**Chunky, Chunky:** Oct. 20-24; Homecoming, Sunday, 11 a.m., service; lunch following; 1:30 p.m. Ridgways; Mon.-Thu., 7 p.m.; Don Taylor, evangelist; Gary Thorne, music.

**Crosby, Crosby:** Oct. 18-20; Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Sat.-Sunday, 7 p.m.; Jimmy Clark, DeRidder, La., speaking; Raymond Steele, music; John Hollowell, pastor; covered dish following Sunday morning service.

**First Church, Durant:** Oct. 20-23; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Ronnie Mayes, Nettleton Church, Jonesboro, Ark., evangelist; Sandy Land, First Church, Itta Bena, music; Matt Brady, pastor.

**Union Church, Roxie:** Oct. 21-25; Sunday and Mon., 7 p.m.; Scott McDowell, Rhineheart, La., evangelist; Tom and Willa Moak, Bogue Chitto, music; Corky Evans, pastor.

**Harmony, Crystal Springs:** Oct. 6-9; Sunday, 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Harvey Reeves, Aberdeen, evangelist; Steve Walker, Pinola, music; Clark Stewart, pastor.

**Gunter Road Church, Florence:** Oct. 13-16; Sunday-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bill Chancellor, speaking; James Johnson, music; Gene Jordan, pastor; dinner on grounds Sunday at noon.

**Caledonia, Union Revival Emphasis (The C.U.R.E.):** Oct. 9-12; Wed. and Thu., New Salem Church, 6:30 p.m.; Fri., after the football game until midnight, Caledonia High School Cafetorium; Sat., Caledonia High School, 6:30 p.m.; Gary Permenter, speaker; Jason Elam, worship; P33, in concert; for more information, call (662) 356-4940.

**Janice Church, Janice:** Oct. 13-16; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Marcus Peagler, Kenneth Shelton, and Charles Cuffman, music evangelists; Jim Futral, Tony Monk, Randall Creel, evangelists; Dean Cook, pastor.

**Shady Grove, Batesville:** Oct. 13-16; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; nursery provided; Desi Ginn, evangelist; Scotty Aldridge,

music; Terry Tribble, pastor.

**Southway Church, Brookhaven:** Oct. 13-16; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m. Worship; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Permenter, speaker; Mark Brown, worship; Leon Wallace, pastor.

**Immanuel, Vicksburg:** Nov. 3-6; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; David Miller, evangelist; Joey McGill, music; Billy Brumfield, pastor.

**Walker Hill, Brandon:** Oct. 13-16; Sunday, 10 a.m.; followed by lunch and afternoon service; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Don Taylor, Conehatta, evangelist; Sandi Sartor, Pearl, music; Ronnie Purser, pastor.

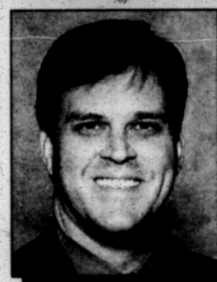
**West Drew, Drew:** Oct. 17-20; Thu.-Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; John Jefferies, Chalmette, La., evangelist; James McNally, pastor.

**Damascus, Flora:** Oct. 13; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner served; afternoon singing; William E. Bradshaw, pastor.

**Westview, Jackson:** Oct. 13; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; luncheon following worship; celebration, 1 p.m.; Carl Savell, pastor.

**Clear Branch, Florence:** Oct. 13; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; afternoon singing; Greg Johnston, Escatawpa, guest pastor.

## STAFF CHANGES



**Jericho Church, Guntown,** has called **Eric Jones** as pastor. A native of Blue Springs and graduate of Mid-America Seminary,

Jones previously pastored at First Church, Savannah, Tenn.

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## Campers give nearly \$566K to missions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) - More than 78,000 youth and children attending summer camps sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention spent the summer playing, praying and learning about Bible study, but also took time to pitch in \$565,772.57 for Southern Baptist International Mission Board projects.

"That's more than they gave last year," said Joe Palmer, student events director at LifeWay Christian Resources, referring to the 78,150 campers who participated in the summer's Centrifuge, M-Fuge, Crosspoint, Centri-Kid and Centri-Break camps.

"I think they have a view that there's a larger view out there and if there is a way they can minister to those needs, they will do so," Palmer said. "We try to put them into a place where youth are helping youth, and for Centri-Kid, children are helping children. They begin to see they can make a difference globally."

The free-will offering will be used to support such specific IMB ministries as:

- short-wave radio broadcasts for the Hazara people, using a verbal evangelistic method called storying to teach foundational biblical truths.

- The Himalayan Java coffeehouse ministry that will provide a witness in the business community, while also allowing missionaries to engage others in non-threatening conversations.

For more information on the youth or children's camps offered each summer by LifeWay, call (877) CAMP123 or visit www.fuge.com on the Internet.

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# Truthquesters take to airwaves in October

NEW YORK (BP) — A group of teenage missionaries will be featured in a new "reality" television show that turns the tables on the genre. TruthQuest: California, which will be shown on FamilyNet Television — a cable Christian television station reaching 34 million homes — thinks good clean Christian fun can succeed.

The show is a partnership of three Southern Baptist organizations — Baptist Press, the national news service of the SBC; FamilyNet Television, a broadcast division of the North American Mission Board; and Broadman & Holman Publishers

of LifeWay Christian Resources, creators of the TruthQuest Inductive Study Bible.

Twelve teenagers were selected for the show, most of whom were strangers to each other. Katie Royals, a member of First Church, Jackson, was chosen for the team. Viewers will be able to watch the group as they work at a community center in San Francisco, try to convert surfers in San Diego and evangelize to those along the way on a 1,200-mile, 16-day journey.

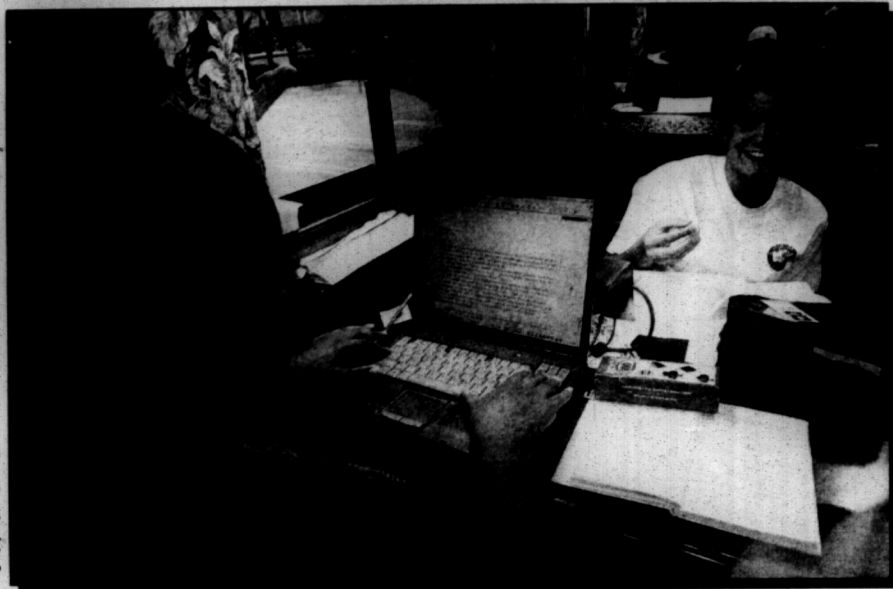
The students range in age from eighth-graders to seniors in high school. All of the teens come from Southern Baptist churches and have had prior missions experience.

"I was watching Road Rules (on MTV) a couple days ago and all they do is argue and have sex," said Sarah Brown, 16, of Youngstown, Ohio. "I'm a teenager; I argue with my parents, but I don't have sex all day. It's not reality TV."

"People need to see that not every teenager has a foul mouth, or is out there being promiscuous or smoking. You know we actually do positive things."

Shanna Hawkins, 17, of Winston-Salem, N.C., said she is eager to show the world the fun side of being a Christian.

"I am hoping that they'll get a glimpse that there are teenagers in the world who are Christians, and also who know how to have fun," she said.



TRUTHQUEST TEAMMATES — Katie Royals (right), a member of First Church, Jackson, offers suggestions to Truthquest teammate Sarah Brown of Youngstown, Ohio, as Brown works on her journal aboard the TruthQuest: California bus earlier this summer. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

This curiosity is the main reason viewers watch reality shows, said Ted Baehr, an analyst for the Christian Film and Television Commission, an organization that evaluates media content for Christian families. Without that more racy content, it's harder to get teens to "tune in," he said.

Todd Starnes, the Baptist Press employee who conceived the project, believes that the differences between TruthQuest and the others will work in its favor. He is hoping that the drama of Christian teenagers

proselytizing in places where they may not receive a warm welcome will carry the show.

"We want people to know that Christians don't just go to church 24/7, but that they are engaged in their culture," he said.

*Editor's note: TruthQuest: California is scheduled to air over FamilyNet on Thursday nights at 6 p.m.; Fridays, 11 a.m. & 10 p.m.; Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.; and Sundays, 11:30 a.m. All times are Central Time. Check cable listings for Truthquest: California, broadcast times in local areas.*

TAKE TWO — Truthquesters Josh Merritt (left), and David Hicks prepare for a scene during the filming of TruthQuest California. (BP photo by Justin Veneman)



## First person: World Hunger Fund answers needs

By Frank Lay, pastor  
Springfield Church, Morton



Lay

The World Hunger Day offering came to have a very personal meaning for me while I was serving as a missionary in Costa Rica.

Our mission's executive committee was meeting when suddenly the mission library began shaking violently. Costa

Rica had just experienced a major, 7.4 Richter scale earthquake.

We soon learned the extent of the damage. Many bridges were destroyed, cutting off thousands of people from the rest of Costa Rica. All available food quickly disappeared from the shelves. Thousands were homeless, hungry, and isolated, with no means of getting help.

A quick trip to the hardest hit area along the Atlantic coast revealed that the International Red Cross was doing an excellent job in the provincial capital of Limon, but there were dozens of small communities still isolated.

We decided to focus on those inaccessible communities that greatly needed assistance. Immediately following the quake, world hunger funds from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) were made available, and food was purchased. Resident missionaries, missionaries from the language school, and members of local Baptist churches met at the Baptist Center and packed hundreds of boxes of food to be delivered to families in the isolated communities.

The trip to the affected area was rather perilous, on the roads severely damaged by the quake. At one place, we had to ford a river because the bridge had been destroyed. We delivered food to several communities on the way to the city of Limon.

Sunday, October 13

FOCUS ON

World Hunger



Until the least of these

For more information contact the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1-800-475-9127 or visit [www.erc.com](http://www.erc.com)

Our goal was to deliver food to the southern part of Costa Rica, but five bridges had been destroyed so it was impossible to drive there. A fishing boat was chartered so that the food could be delivered to small towns along the Atlantic coast. People in six isolated communities were provided with necessary food. Whenever possible, the food was distributed through local Baptist churches.

Thanks to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, we were able to provide much needed assistance in a major crisis in the name of Jesus Christ. This writer was privileged to be a part of that experience.

Every penny sent to us was used to provide needed food for desperate people. To be sure, there were administrative expenses incurred in the trip, but those expenses were met by other sources. One hundred percent of the monies sent by the World Hunger Fund were used to meet that need.

Many years have passed since that day, yet hunger continues to be a serious problem in our world, in our own nation, and even in our own state of Mississippi. Thankfully, some churches are beginning to minister to those who are hungry through food pantries and feeding programs.

One way each church can help is to participate in World Hunger Day on October 13. The Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund is the only hunger ministry to use 100% of every dollar donated to minister to hungry people.

Remember the words of Jesus when he said, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat" (Matt. 25:35).

For more information on the SBC World Hunger Fund, go to [www.erc.com](http://www.erc.com).

## N.O. alums set meeting for Oct. 29

Mississippi alumni of New Orleans Seminary (NOBS) are invited to a meeting at 12:00 p.m., October 29, at First Church, Jackson. The featured speaker will be Thomas Strong from NOBS. The cost is \$10.00 per person. RSVP by October 15 to Nathan Barber at (601) 264-2427, or the NOBS Alumni Office at (800) NOBS-01, ext. 3331.



# FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

## Blessing the Nations

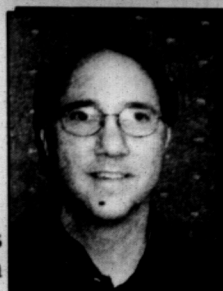
Genesis 17:1-8, 15-22

By Gene Neal

Last week we defined "covenant" as a sacred bond that unites two parties of unequal authority, specifically, God and man. God made such a bond with Noah and his descendants following the great Flood. This week we see God make another such bond, this time with Abram. While the two covenants are different in many ways, they both demonstrate the incredible love God has for all people everywhere. Anyone who is blessed to be in a church that sponsors mission trips outside this country has heard the question, "why should we be going there?" A simple answer to that question is: that is what God did, that is what God does, and that is what God requires us to do. God began this world-wide mission thrust when

He first made His covenant with Abram in Genesis 12:3. Not only was His covenant with Abram but also with "all peoples on earth." While God's covenant with Abram promised multitudes of descendants and the acquisition of great amounts of land, the beauty of the covenant was in the hope for all the world that would come from Abrams offspring. A study and understanding of scripture helps us know that this hope for the world was none other than Jesus Christ.

We also see God's love and world-wide plan in the names used in our text. "Abram" means "exalted father" while "Abraham" means "father of a multitude." Imagine the laughter among his people when this childless old man told everyone that God had named him "father of a multi-



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tude." Each time his new name was used it was a reminder that God had made a covenant with them and this covenant brought hope for people everywhere throughout the ages.

As already mentioned, a covenant is between two parties, in this case, God and Abraham. God's part of the covenant came in blessings, protection, divine presence, and hope for the future. What was Abraham's part of the covenant? Abraham was told that he and his descendants were to be set apart to God. The sign or representation for this relationship was to be circumcision. God intended this to be a way to designate these people as His people. The relationship between God and the people was always the ultimate goal in the heart of God, not the mark of the relationship. The Jews of Jesus' day misunderstood and saw circumcision as an act whereby one could receive righteousness just as some today misunderstand church membership.

No ceremony, mark, symbol, or sign should substitute for our relationship with God.

In the midst of a story about the covenant between God and Abraham, there is a powerful lesson on doing things God's way. Genesis 17:17-18 helps us see aside of Abraham that might painfully remind us more of ourselves than the man of faith. Apparently, Abraham wanted to believe God but was having a problem with God's timing. The promise of an offspring was a God-sized promise that did not fit into Abraham's time table. Abraham saw it easier to trust in something he could see and feel than in something that was humanly impossible. Basically, he was refusing to believe that God would perform a miracle. Ishmael represented the past, a product of understandable human effort. How often do we fall to the same reasoning? Trust in past accomplishments! Depend on what you understand! We must fight the temptation to trust in human effort rather than depend on the super-

natural power of God. We must remember that God's ways, though seemingly illogical at times, are always the best ways. This is a wonderfully practical lesson for all who desire to live by faith. Throughout scripture, God has demonstrated that He is dependable to keep His promises even when they are beyond our ability to understand.

As we think about God's promise, "and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you," it becomes clear that we are a part of God's plan from long, long ago. When God made that promise, could He have been thinking of the ways He would use even Christians today to carry the message of Christ as a blessing to all nations? As we take the message of Christ's love next door, across the country, or into foreign lands, we are actually fulfilling God's promise to Abraham in Genesis. What a blessing to be a small part of His faithfulness!

Neal is the pastor of First Church, Quitman.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Real Life and Commitment

John 6

By Ginger M. Caughman

Who was Jesus anyway? His traveling school of disciples continued to see the work of God through Jesus' miracles. Notice how they responded after the miraculous feeding of the 5,000. Disciples were required to give Christ a total commitment. So are we. Commitment is not a popular word today. Many couples today still believe that marriage is a lifetime commitment. Who is Jesus to you? Are you totally committed to Him?

Here our Lord teaches His lessons through the miracle with food, the miracle on the water, Jesus' discourse on the Bread of Life, His answers for the grumbling crowd and the choices for His disciples. This Sunday, as Jesus teaches us by the Holy Spirit of God, we will study the importance of believers meeting Jesus'

expectation of commitment. Today ponder the challenge of being fully committed to the Lord and His service as you read all of John 6.

1. Who Is the Lord? Read John 6:1-40; 41-48.

After Jesus' miraculous feeding of the crowd by the Sea of Galilee the people wanted to make Jesus an earthly king (v. 15). Neither did the disciples understand the miracles they witnessed. John gives us an interesting detail. The disciples had rowed about 3 1/2 miles and were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on the water (v.19). When Jesus got into the boat, immediately they were at the shore (v. 21)! Later the crowds searched for Jesus until they found Him (v.25). When Jesus answered their question about what God



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required, He replied, "To believe in the one God sent" (v. 29). He was basically saying, "Believe in Me."

God provided manna, physical bread of earth and now offered spiritual bread of heaven, the bread of life. (Read John 6:35, 48, 51). Just as Jesus offered spiritual water to

the woman at the well, here He offers spiritual bread. As the Jews began to mumble and grumble, Jesus stopped them with the profound truth: "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him" (v. 44).

2. What If Questions Arise? Read John 6:57-58, 60-65.

That we all learn from repetition is a basic principle of education. The disciple John, so beautifully repeats themes throughout this Gospel. John was reporting on what he had seen and heard (John 20:30). Jesus was clear about His message and His mission. In His metaphors of bread, He compared Himself to physical food (v. 58). Jesus was and is the bread of life. Those who believed then and those who believe in Him today will

live forever.

3. How Will We Respond? Read John 6:66-69.

The demands of discipleship were high. "From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him" (v. 66). So Jesus asked His twelve disciples if they also wanted to leave? Most Christians want to be totally committed to Christ but many are tempted to leave His service when difficulty arises.

Personalize Simon Peter's poignant answer as your prayer during hard times, changing we to I: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God." The words of the old spiritual focus on this truth. "Where can I go but to the Lord?"

Dr. J. Wash Watts (1896-1975), Southern Baptist scholar, worked at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary without pay for more than a year in the early 1930's. He served as teacher, Dean, and three times as Acting President. The symbols on the cherrywood pulpit in the seminary chapel reflect

his philosophy. Above the Old and New Testament Scriptures on tablets and a scroll are a cross and a crown. Dr. Watts wrote: "Together, these constitute the base on which Old and New Testament teaching stand, on which Christian worship and Christian ethics are united. Acceptance of these sacred obligations inevitably leads both to the cross and to the crown of Christian service. Therefore these appear above the others." Today many pastors, laymen and laywomen faithfully serve our Lord day-by-day in genuine commitment.

Do you collect quotes? Written in the back of my Bible are several. Dr. Jimmie E. Knox, my pastor for over 10 years preached: "Regardless of what any other Christian does, God has laid His call on you!" God used that 1975 sermon to challenge me to a deeper Christian commitment.

What is your level of commitment to Christ? Worship Him, praise Him, and serve Him with your whole heart.

Caughman is a member of First Church, Magee.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-



mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's

address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be

clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330.



## Church/ politics bill turned back

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. House of Representatives has turned back legislation that would have permitted churches to engage in political campaigns. The House voted 239-178 against the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act, H.R. 2357. The measure required a two-thirds majority for passage, because the rules had to be suspended to consider the bill.

The legislation would have amended the Internal Revenue Code to lift its total ban on political activities by churches and other houses of worship. Under its rules for 501(c)(3) groups, the Internal Revenue Service prohibits any activity that encourages a vote for or against a candidate. Jones' proposal would require any participation by a church or similar entity in a political campaign not to be a "substantial part" of its activities.

Ten Democrats joined with 168 Republicans in voting for the bill Oct. 2, while 192 Democrats, 46 Republicans and an independent opposed the measure.

The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) supported the bill but said it would still advise Baptist churches not to endorse candidates for office.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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AEJ OBCP JBC YEQPCVV

HY JBC JKUC OZV

GHUC, NHX VCPJ YHIJB

BKV VHP, UZXC HY Z

OHUZP, UZXC EPXCI

JBC QZO.

NZQZJKZPV YHEI: YHWI

Clue: B=H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans Ten: Eleven.

# LifeWay unveils \$27M Nashville expansion

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) trumpeted a \$27 million addition to its downtown Nashville complex with a special dedication ceremony Sept. 18.

About 1,200 SBC and city officials, local church and business leaders, construction personnel, and LifeWay trustees and employees attended the hour-long service that, despite scattered rain, moved from LifeWay's auditorium to the new One LifeWay Plaza main entrance for a ribbon cutting ceremony.

"Our newest building, One LifeWay Plaza, provides employees and visitors with 802 parking spaces, a 325-seat cafeteria, updated office space, a prayer chapel for employees, and a new main entrance corridor," LifeWay President James T. Draper Jr. said. "We thank each of you who are here today for being our partner in helping us proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ around the world," he added.

Draper told visitors that in 1984, LifeWay began a feasibility study to determine whether it needed to move to another location or remain in the downtown Nashville area. In 1986, LifeWay officials and trustees decided, "the best alternative for future growth was to remain downtown," he said.

LifeWay has completed several projects since the master plan was developed, Draper said, including the most recent

One LifeWay Plaza main entrance, and:

- Construction of an 11-story office tower, completed in 1990;

- Construction of a new north dock for shipping and receiving;

- Purchase of space for employee parking;

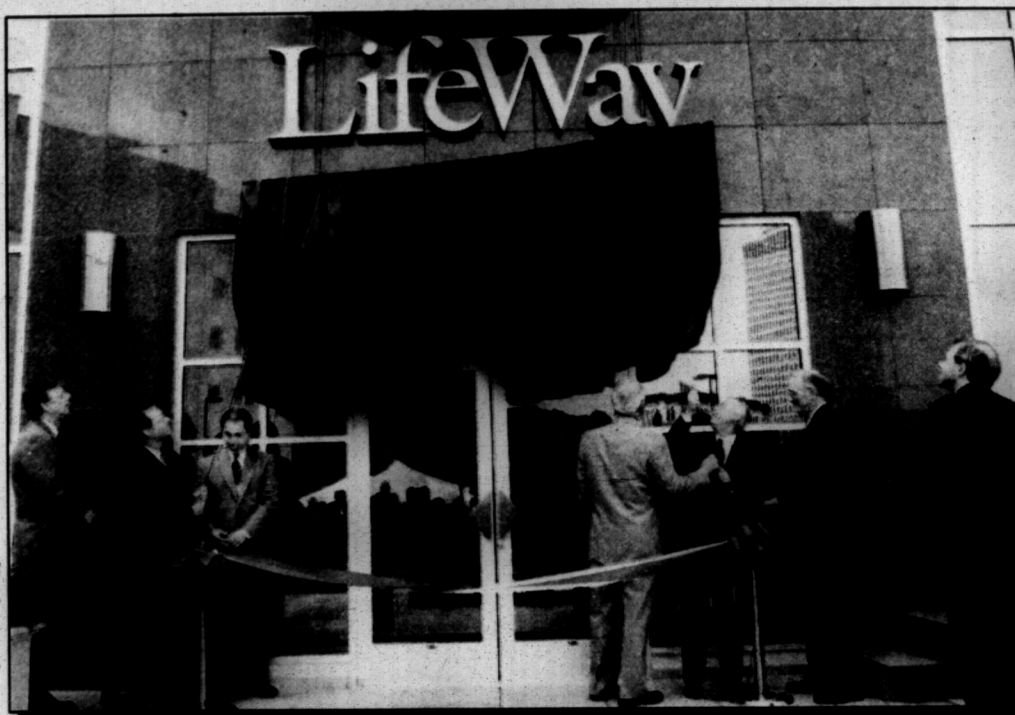
- Construction of a new distribution center for undated materials in nearby Lebanon, Tenn.;

- Refurbishing of existing space for the LifeWay Christian Stores division; and

- Construction of a new parking garage.

LifeWay's Nashville facilities encompass more than 1.2 million square feet of floor space. The publishing entity owns and operates 110 LifeWay Christian Stores in 21 states and two national conference centers, in North Carolina and New Mexico. LifeWay opened a 250,000-square-foot distribution warehouse in Lebanon, Tenn., in 2000.

Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell congratulated LifeWay on its new addition, saying, "LifeWay serves as a major anchor for the western edge of the downtown business district. This is an



NEW ADDRESS — LifeWay's Executive Management Group and Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell (right) unveil the new LifeWay name over the entrance of One LifeWay Plaza. The Southern Baptist Convention agency was previously known at the Baptist Sunday School Board. (BP photo by Kent Harville)

excellent example of how to build the vitality of the downtown business community."

Marty Dickens, chairman of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce executive committee and president of BellSouth of Tennessee, said, "LifeWay is a major contributor to the financial health of our community." He added, "We also thank you for the spiritual influence you have in our community through the resources you produce, as well as your

employees' involvement in the service clubs, community organizations and churches."

Owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Convention, LifeWay is among the world's largest publishers of religious materials. Through its LifeWay Church Resources and Broadman and Holman Publishing divisions, LifeWay produces 188 monthly and quarterly products and more than 300 new, undated products annually.

## TLW pledge reworked for latest theme emphasis

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — True Love Waits Goes Home is the newest theme for the sexual purity emphasis for students sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources.

The True Love Waits commitment has been reworded to broaden the scope of the commitment. The pledge now states: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate, and my future children to a lifetime of purity including sexual abstinence from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship."

Jimmy Hester, senior director in LifeWay's student ministry publishing, said the reworded pledge emphasizes "the work of God through his people as families are challenged to be pure and to model what it means to live godly lives."

"Students and families go hand in hand," Hester said, noting the importance for "families to commit to living a life of purity together."

February is designated as True Love Waits Month on the Southern Baptist Convention calendar. In February 2003 churches will be encouraged to provide opportunities for parents and students to study, pray and make commitments to purity.

"For the first time since the beginning of the campaign, parents will be invited to make a promise to sexual fidelity and purity," Hester said. "We know that in many

Having a True Love Waits pledge for parents can help families see that purity in lifestyle goes beyond teens avoiding sex; it applies to the whole family, he said.

The parent's commitment states: "Believing that true love is pure, I join (insert student's name) in committing to a lifestyle of purity. I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, and my community of faith to abstain from pornography, impure touching and conversations, and sex outside a biblical marriage relationship from this day forward."

In connection with the emphasis, LifeWay will release a new "True Love Waits Goes Home Manual" in October for use by youth ministers, volunteer leaders, families and other student leaders.

"The manual will direct churches and student organizations to help families connect or reconnect with God and to understand and live his principles in their lives," Hester said. Tools in the manual include:

- Directions for meetings with parents to help prepare them to lead their families in living a life of purity.

- Instructions that will help parents conduct a study in their homes on living a life of purity.

- Information and tools for working with students who have no support from their families.

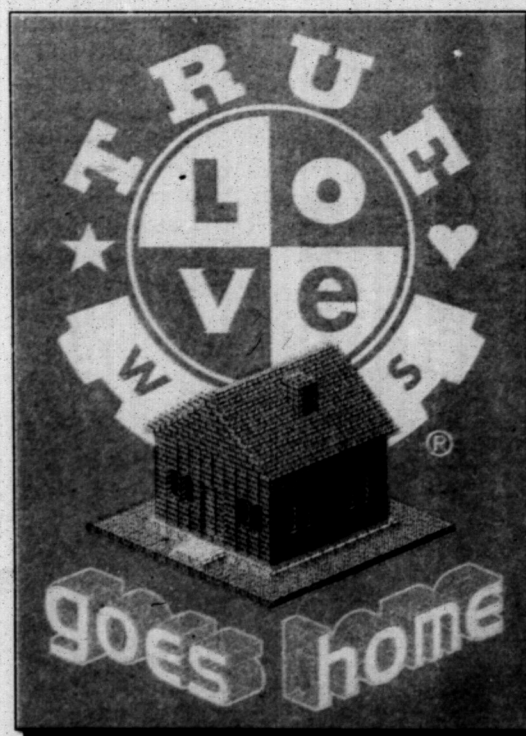
- Ideas on how to involve other significant adults in the lives of students for encouragement and accountability.

- Tools to help student leaders conduct a strong emphasis in the local church (small-group ideas, weekday Bible studies, Wednesday night services, assemblies, etc.).

- Plans for worship experiences (sermon ideas, music/choruses, drama sketches, readings, etc.).

Also in October, LifeWay will publish "Living Pure Inside Out," a study for students that can also be used by families.

In the second year of True Love Waits Goes Home, an international display will be developed for the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, Hester said. More information about the display will be released as it becomes available.



families, the issue of purity is not just a teen issue. With the proliferation of pornography and divorce, purity has become an issue for a lot of parents."